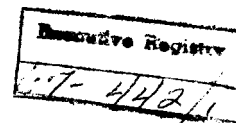


6 MAR 1967

SECRET



NAVY review completed

17 March 1967

Dear Admiral McDonald,

Today we had the privilege of listening to Rear Admiral George Miller and his people from Op-97 present their briefing on SABMIS (Sea-Based Ballistic Missile Intercept System).

Many of our top people listened with intense interest as Mr. Jankowitz described this fascinating concept. The audience included the Chairman of the Board of National Estimates and most of the members of his Board as well as some of our key scientific and technical intelligence people.

The entire presentation was most effective and the answers given to the many questions asked left little doubt that the Strategic Offensive and Defensive Systems people of OPNAV have given deep, thorough and careful thought to one of the most serious problems affecting the balance of power between the U.S. and the USSR today.

I think that if this country were to undertake seriously the development of such a system as SABMIS and to let its capabilities be known to the Russians, it might well provide a major factor in bringing about a Soviet reassessment of its capability to achieve a position of strategic superiority sufficient to encourage the acceptance of increased risks of a general nuclear war. This could be more effective than any political effort to achieve an agreement against the development of ABM systems inasmuch as it would put the Soviets in the position of being unable to calculate that it could come out ahead in a pre-emptive strike against the United States. In addition, even granting considerable vulnerability to the SABMIS ships on station, the warning time achieved from an attack on them might be just the time necessary to enable us to launch our own missiles before they could be destroyed. The Russians would certainly have an appreciation for this. Lastly, if the figures we saw are supportable, the national confidence established as a result of being able to achieve a reasonably effective distant ballistic missile defense, at a price far less than has been mentioned so far for our continental based ABM systems, might well be a major factor in providing more resolution and confidence in our most weighty political decisions.

At any rate, the stimulation to our own thought and the additional considerations the briefing injects into our own estimating convolutions are going to be factors of considerable value to us in themselves. Again, please accept my thanks for making George Miller and his people available.

With warmest personal regards,

Sincerely,

/s/ Rufus Taylor

Rufus Taylor  
Vice Admiral, U. S. Navy  
Deputy Director

Admiral David L. McDonald  
Chief of Naval Operations  
Department of the Navy  
Washington, D. C.

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RT/mfb

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<b>TRANSMITTAL SLIP</b>		DATE
TO: Dr. Kent		March
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